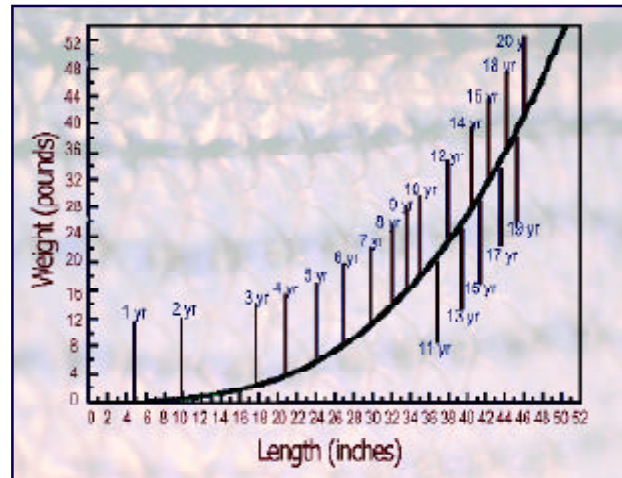




Age your fish!



Why catch and release?

Striped bass need your help to survive and thrive!

Current sport fishing regulations are designed to maintain a healthy striped bass population. Catch and release angling can further enhance these efforts.

Every fish you release has the potential to grow, reproduce, and help the striped bass population become self-sustaining. This is especially important with the larger females who produce more eggs than their smaller counterparts.

Catch and release will mean more striped bass, larger striped bass, and more fishing fun!



Use the length or weight of your fish to determine its age.

For more information contact:

Department of Fish and Game
4001 N Wilson Way
Stockton, CA 95205
(209) 948-7800



www.delta.dfg.ca.gov/stripedbass

Funded by the Striped Bass Stamp Fund

Endorsed by:

California Striped Bass Association
California Sport Fish Protection Alliance
Federation of Fly Fishers
United Anglers

Alternate communication format available upon request. If reasonable accommodation is needed call Patricia Lopez at (916) 653-6420 or the California Relay (Telephone) Service for the deaf or hearing-impaired from TDD phones at 1-800-735-2929 or 711.

Get hooked on Catch and Release



for Striped Bass

Striped Bass

Striped bass inhabit the Sacramento-San Joaquin Estuary year-round. Specific locations vary with season and migratory patterns. Striped bass can be found in coastal waters, bays, estuaries, and in fresh-water rivers.

In the fall, striped bass migrate upstream from coastal waters and San Francisco Bay to the Delta.

In the spring, striped bass move to fresh-water spawning areas upstream. During this time they are found from the Delta up to 124 miles upstream in the Sacramento and Feather rivers.

By mid-June most adults begin to leave the Delta and move back into the brackish and salty waters of San Francisco Bay. Some will travel into the Pacific Ocean.

Striped bass become sexually mature at different ages. Males mature at age 2 and females at age 4 or 5. Larger, older females produce more eggs. At first spawn, a female may produce 250,000 eggs; whereas, a 10-12 pound female will produce nearly a million eggs. By practicing catch and release, you may increase the number of eggs released during the spawning period, potentially increasing the number of striped bass produced!



How to catch and release a striped bass

When properly handled and released, striped bass have an excellent chance of survival. The following guidelines can reduce injury and stress, greatly improving its ability to survive.

Be prepared to release a fish before you catch it.

Tackle

- DO use circle hooks if bait fishing.
- DO use single barbless hooks or bend down the barb on conventional hooks.
- DO replace treble hooks with single hooks.
- DO use tackle strong enough to bring the fish in quickly and reduce exhaustion.
- DON'T use stainless steel hooks.

Handling

- DO use wet hands or wet cotton gloves when handling your fish.
- DO remove the hook quickly and gently while keeping the fish in water.
- DO minimize the time that fish are out of the water.
- DON'T play your fish to exhaustion.

Reviving and releasing

- DO hold the fish horizontally and upright facing into the current.
- DO gently move the fish forward and backwards until it swims away on its own.

Releasing striped bass under special circumstances

If the fish is deeply hooked (gut hooked), cut the leader as close as possible to the hook, leaving the hook in place. Do not try to snap the leader - cut it.

If the hook cannot be removed quickly, place the fish in water and remove the hook.

Keep your long-nosed pliers or hemostats handy for a quick hook removal!



Health Advisory

Fish are nutritious, but some fish you catch may have accumulated toxic chemicals from the water they live in and the food they eat. Regulations suggest that striped bass larger than 35 inches should not be eaten.

For more information read your regulations book or look at the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment's website at www.oehha.ca.gov/fish/